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Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Monitoring of organophosphorous pesticide residue in processed foods

2008

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Report Highlights:

On February 19, 2008, MHLW announced a new policy requiring quarantine offices to enforce inspections of processed foods for agricultural chemical residues, specifically targeted at organophosphorous pesticides. This new policy is triggered by several recent detections of chemical residue violations in frozen processed foods, rather than just the recent incident of tainted dumplings containing an extremely high level (130ppm) of methamidophos.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Annual Report
Tokyo [JA1]
[JA]

On February 19, 2008, MHLW notified quarantine offices of a new policy requiring inspection of processed foods for agricultural chemical residues, specifically targeted at organophosphorous pesticides. This new policy is triggered by several recent detections of chemicals in frozen processed foods, rather than just the recent incident of tainted dumplings containing a lethal level of methamidophos.

The notification was sent to quarantine offices, actual details of the testing requirements, such as the number of tests, violation threshold, and so on, are not announced yet.

Provisional translation MHLW's press release on February 19, 2008.

Original release can be found at <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/houdou/2008/02/h0219-3.html>

Translation starts.

February 19, 2008
Office of Import Food Safety,
Inspection and Safety Division,
Dept of Food Safety,
Pharmaceutical and Food Safety
Bureau, MHLW

The enforcement of agricultural chemical residue inspection for frozen processed foods.

1. Recently, the results of residue inspections by local municipalities and business stakeholders revealed detections of agricultural chemicals in frozen processed foods and reported as cases violating the Food Hygiene Law.
2. Currently, each local municipality is investigating the cause of these residue detections, however, the detection level is as low as normal chemical residues. Therefore, such cases will not have any immediate effect on human health. Any health damage related to these cases are not being reported either. Furthermore, measures such as recalls are being implemented by the local municipality and business stakeholders.
3. MHLW has been giving importers administrative guidance to confirm the residue level of raw materials in processed foods. MHLW, however, notified quarantine offices to take the following actions to the corresponding recent chemical residue cases.
 - 1) Provide guidance for voluntary inspection by importers for dichlorvos (DDVP) and methamidophos to the manufacturers of processed foods that made the violation.
 - 2) Provide guidance to all importers of any processing food to verify agricultural chemical residue management of raw materials and the manufacturing process.
 - 3) Enforce monitoring inspection for organophosphorous pesticides (including dichlorvos (DDVP) and methamidophos) in food manufacturers other than violators. This enforcement is to validate agricultural chemical residue management of raw materials and the manufacturing process.

Case 1 of residue detection

Name of product: frozen food served without heating: salted and vinegared mackerel.

Country of Product: China

Recommended use-by date: December 1, 2007

Test results: dichlorvos (DDVP) – 0.14ppm (as a whole product)

Importer: Shinko Gyorui LTD, 1-1-1 Nakanoshima, Hyogo-ku, Kobe-City

Manufacturer: Weihai Yuwang Aquatic Foodstuff Co., Ltd. and Weihai Jinlin Aquatic Co., Ltd.

Case 2 of residue detection

Name of product: frozen food served after heating: meat bun

Country of Product: China

Recommended use-by date: February 2, 2008

Test results: methamidophos - 0.51 ppm (as a whole product) (bun skin - 0.25ppm, solid ingredient - 0.59ppm), 0.64ppm (as a whole product) (bun skin - 0.22ppm, solid ingredient - 0.49ppm)

Importer: Nicky Trading Co., Ltd. 2-6-34, Senshu, Nishiyodogawa-ku, Osaka-City

Manufacturer: Sandong Nicky Foods Co., Ltd.